

SENATE FISH AND GAME

Exhibit No. 4

Date 01/15/2015

Bill No. SB 87



Testimony on SB87
Senate Fish and Game
January 15th, 2015

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Chairman Brendon and members of the Committee,

My name is Amy Seaman and I am here representing over 5,200 Montana Audubon members in support of SB 87.

It is our mission is to promote the appreciation, knowledge and conservation of Montana's native birds, other wildlife, and natural ecosystems to safeguard biological diversity for current and future generations.

Many important bird species, including bald eagles, osprey, kingfishers and Great Blue Herons - rely on healthy fisheries for survival. For the 60%* of Montanans who go birding for recreation, these iconic species need to remain free from the effects of illegal fish transports between bodies of water.

Eliminating the ability of a person to possess, ship, or transport live fish away from waters within the boundaries of the eastern Montana fishing district is a positive move towards lessening the potential for illegal fish introductions.

Illegal fish introductions can have unintended consequences such as displacing existing fisheries resulting in a loss of fishing opportunity, introducing disease, contaminating the genetic lineages of native species, raising fish management costs (often later born by anglers), and altering important aquatic food webs.

For these reasons we strongly urge a do-pass on this bill. Thank you.

* Birding in the United States: A demographic and economic analysis by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service.

